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Missouri's Unemployment Rate Unchanged in December

Missouri labor market conditions in December were little changed from November, but have generally been improving since the summer according to the Missouri Department of Economic Development. The unemployment rate remained at 5.0 percent on a seasonally adjusted basis and much lower than the national unemployment rate of 5.7 percent. Total non-farm payroll employment was virtually the same as in November.

Since peaking in June, the estimated number of jobless Missourians has decreased by 21,500 and the unemployment rate has dropped by seven-tenths of a point. Payrolls have added nearly 30,000 jobs since the low level of July 2003.

The unadjusted unemployment rate for December was 4.8 percent, the same as in November and six-tenths of a point lower than in December 2002. The national unadjusted rate for December was 5.4 percent.

"We are pleased that Missouri's unemployment rate is stable and still well below the rest of the nation," said DED Director Kelvin L. Simmons. "Our low unemployment rate and job growth during the past year are both indicators of great economic momentum in our state. We anticipate this trend continuing as we move into the new year."

Non-farm payroll employment was 2,663,600 in December, seasonally adjusted. There were relatively small over-the-month changes in individual super sectors. Gains of 1,400 in construction, 2,100 in government, and smaller amounts in information, financial activities, and leisure and hospitality offset losses in professional and business services (-2,300), educational and health services (-1,400), manufacturing (-1,100), and other services. Between January 2003 and December, Missouri added 27,000 jobs.

There has been considerable variation in performance of the various industry groups over the past year. Employment in the goods-producing sectors has grown over the year, where gains of 4,100 construction jobs more than offset net losses of 2,200 in manufacturing. Even within manufacturing, there have been industry differences, with fabricated metal products and food manufacturing growing by 1,700 and 1,000 jobs, respectively. The largest reported decrease in manufacturing was in computer and electronics manufacturing, where employment was down by 1,100.

The private service-providing sectors experienced a net gain of 1,000 jobs. Industries with larger gains included health care and social assistance (3,800); leisure and hospitality (2,400); private educational services (2,200); wholesaling of nondurable goods (2,100); and accounting, tax preparation and bookkeeping services (2,100).

Larger decreases occurred in air transportation (-5,100); repair and maintenance services (-3,200); retail trade (-2,900); employment services (-2,300); and telecommunications (-2,300). Government employment is down by 5,400 jobs over the year, with a 3,500-job (3.3 percent) decrease in state government.

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MISSOURI UNEMPLOYMENT RATES
FOR METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS (MSAs), LABOR MARKET AREAS (LMAs), AND COUNTIES
CURRENT MONTH (DECEMBER 2003), PREVIOUS TWO MONTHS (OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2003), AND YEAR AGO (DECEMBER 2002)

	DEC 2003	NOV 2003	OCT 2003	DEC 2002		DEC 2003	NOV 2003	OCT 2003	DEC 2002
U.S. (not seasonally adjusted)	5.4	5.6	5.6	5.7	Atchison	3.1	2.6	2.4	2.8
MISSOURI	4.8	4.8	4.9	5.4	Audrain	4.7	4.7	4.9	5.2
ST. LOUIS MSA	5.2	5.4	5.4	5.5	Barton	3.9	4.0	3.8	4.3
Franklin	5.1	4.8	5.2	5.9	Bates	7.2	6.3	6.4	7.8
Jefferson	4.8	4.6	4.5	5.5	Benton	7.0	6.0	5.9	7.9
Lincoln	5.5	4.7	4.7	6.0	Caldwell	6.5	6.7	6.4	7.7
St. Charles	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.9	Carroll	4.7	4.1	4.0	5.9
St. Louis County	4.3	4.5	4.6	4.6	Cedar	5.8	5.8	6.3	7.9
Warren	4.7	4.6	5.1	5.8	Chariton	5.6	5.5	6.0	7.0
St. Louis City	8.3	9.0	9.5	9.1	Clark	7.4	7.0	6.7	7.9
KANSAS CITY MSA	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.6	Cooper	3.5	3.0	3.0	4.5
Cass	4.7	4.4	4.6	4.8	Crawford	6.6	5.9	6.1	7.4
Clay	3.8	3.9	4.1	4.3	Dade	4.4	4.1	4.3	4.4
Clinton	5.1	4.6	4.5	5.7	Dallas	5.8	5.7	5.2	6.7
Jackson	5.8	6.0	6.3	6.6	Daviess	5.5	5.3	5.6	5.6
Lafayette	4.5	4.1	4.4	4.9	DeKalb	5.0	4.5	4.4	5.3
Platte	3.6	3.8	3.8	4.2	Dent	6.4	5.5	5.4	8.0
Ray	5.1	4.9	5.4	5.2	Douglas	7.4	7.1	7.6	10.3
SPRINGFIELD MSA	3.4	3.4	3.5	4.1	Dunklin	7.2	6.6	7.0	8.4
Christian	4.0	3.9	4.0	5.0	Gasconade	5.1	5.0	6.3	6.2
Greene	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.8	Gentry	2.7	2.8	2.8	3.5
Webster	3.8	3.4	3.2	5.0	Grundy	5.2	5.3	5.3	5.0
JOPLIN MSA	4.3	4.4	4.5	5.5	Harrison	5.0	3.5	3.5	5.6
Jasper	4.1	4.2	4.4	4.9	Henry	6.9	6.9	6.7	6.4
Newton	4.6	4.8	4.6	6.5	Hickory	9.7	8.6	9.1	8.9
COLUMBIA MSA	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.0	Holt	4.1	3.5	3.3	4.6
Boone	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.0	Howard	4.0	3.5	3.6	4.8
ST. JOSEPH MSA	5.0	5.0	5.1	5.7	Iron	8.4	6.4	6.7	9.7
Andrew	5.1	4.6	4.7	5.1	Johnson	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.8
Buchanan	5.0	5.0	5.2	5.9	Knox	3.9	3.7	3.3	3.6
ADAIR-SCHUYLER LMA	3.9	3.4	3.6	3.1	Laclede	8.7	8.8	7.1	5.7
Adair	3.5	3.1	3.4	2.8	Lewis	3.7	3.5	3.5	5.1
Schuyler	6.2	5.1	4.8	5.1	Linn	7.7	8.6	10.3	10.4
BUTLER-CARTER-RIPLEY LMA	5.1	4.9	4.9	6.3	Livingston	4.3	4.2	3.9	4.1
Butler	4.7	4.6	4.5	5.8	McDonald	5.2	5.1	5.1	13.1
Carter	7.1	6.1	4.9	7.4	Macon	5.6	5.0	4.7	6.2
Ripley	5.9	5.3	6.5	7.7	Madison	5.8	5.8	5.8	8.6
CAMDEN-MILLER LMA	7.2	5.5	4.5	8.5	Mercer	5.1	5.0	4.2	7.2
Camden	7.2	5.6	4.4	8.3	Monroe	7.2	6.2	6.0	7.3
Miller	7.3	5.4	4.7	8.9	Montgomery	5.9	5.3	5.7	6.4
CAPE GIRARDEAU-SCOTT-NEW MADRID LMA	4.6	4.7	4.8	5.7	Morgan	7.3	5.7	5.0	8.4
Bollinger	5.9	5.3	5.0	6.0	Nodaway	1.8	1.5	1.3	2.1
Cape Girardeau	3.0	3.3	3.5	3.9	Ozark	6.0	5.1	4.2	6.8
Mississippi	7.3	6.5	6.8	8.7	Pemiscot	9.0	8.6	8.8	10.8
New Madrid	8.4	8.1	8.1	11.0	Perry	2.8	2.7	2.6	3.1
Scott	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.7	Pettis	4.8	4.5	4.8	5.6
COLE-CALLAWAY-MONITEAU LMA	3.0	2.7	2.8	3.6	Pike	4.4	4.0	4.3	5.1
Callaway	3.4	2.9	3.1	3.9	Polk	3.7	3.3	3.7	4.2
Cole	2.5	2.4	2.4	3.0	Pulaski	4.3	4.1	3.9	4.9
Moniteau	3.3	2.5	2.6	4.1	Putnam	5.3	5.0	5.1	5.9
Osage	4.0	3.5	3.8	5.2	Randolph	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.6
HOWELL-OREGON-SHANNON LMA	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.7	Reynolds	11.3	9.7	8.1	11.1
Howell	5.4	5.7	5.9	5.3	St. Clair	6.3	5.7	5.8	6.0
Oregon	3.6	4.3	3.9	4.4	Ste. Genevieve	4.5	4.4	4.2	5.3
Shannon	9.4	8.1	6.9	8.9	Saline	4.6	4.2	4.3	5.4
LAWRENCE-BARRY LMA	4.6	4.3	4.0	5.4	Scotland	3.8	3.3	2.2	4.3
Barry	4.9	4.5	4.1	6.1	Shelby	10.0	4.3	4.4	5.9
Lawrence	4.3	4.2	4.0	4.8	Stoddard	5.8	5.0	5.0	7.0
MARION-RALLS LMA	4.8	4.6	4.6	5.2	Stone	8.7	6.8	5.7	8.6
Marion	4.2	4.3	4.6	4.9	Sullivan	6.1	5.9	6.1	8.0
Ralls	6.3	5.7	4.6	6.0	Taney	5.2	3.6	3.3	5.2
PHELPS-MARIES LMA	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.8	Texas	7.5	7.6	7.3	8.1
Maries	3.0	2.8	3.2	4.5	Vernon	4.9	4.2	4.4	4.8
Phelps	2.9	2.7	2.7	3.6	Wayne	10.0	9.2	9.5	12.7
ST. FRANCOIS-WASHINGTON LMA	7.0	6.5	6.6	8.5	Worth	4.5	4.0	3.7	3.5
St. Francois	6.4	6.1	6.3	7.9	Wright	7.6	7.1	6.8	7.8
Washington	8.5	7.3	7.4	10.1					

NOTE: DATA FOR COUNTIES WITHIN MSAs/LMAs ARE DISAGGREGATED FROM MSA/LMA TOTALS.

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